

Women's Health Awareness Day serves Durham area

By Robin Arnette and Kelly Lenox

On April 11, women of Durham, North Carolina and surrounding counties enjoyed Women's Health Awareness Day 2015 — a full day of activities to promote women's health awareness and provide helpful services and tools. Organizers welcomed more than 400 participants to the free program on the campus of North Carolina Central University (NCCU) in Durham. The NCCU Department of Public Health Education sponsored the event, along with the NIEHS Office of Human Research Compliance (OHRC) and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Because the month of April is set aside for recognition of public health, domestic violence, and minority health and health disparities, planners placed special emphasis on serving women of color as well as the underserved, uninsured, and underinsured. "If you ask, Why women," said Joan Packenham, Ph.D., director of OHRC and an active member of Delta Sigma Theta, "NIEHS knows that women are the core of the family, and when you promote women's health, it leads to a healthier family, which leads to healthy communities."

Linked Video

[Watch as Packenham explained the importance of promoting women's health in this ABC news clip. \(2:13\)](#)

Everything in one place

The event offered four major health components in one centralized location — seminars, information sessions, health services, and on-site screenings and resources. Seminars, such as "Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease, the Overlooked Women-Killer" and "Diabetes 101 and the Durham Diabetes Coalition," and activities, such as healthy cooking demonstrations and screenings for diabetes and coronary artery blockage, were well-attended (for full list, see [text box](#)).

Clinical research booths provided information about active clinical research studies in the local area, including those being conducted at NIEHS. To help participants better understand participation in clinical studies, NIEHS sponsored a performance titled, "Trials, Not Tribulations: Judging Which Clinical Trial Fits You Best."

Community engagement

Community engagement is an important component of clinical research at the institute, according to Packenham. "Since NIEHS is actively carrying out clinical research studies, it is important that the community know who we are and that we are genuinely interested in working with them as an actual partner and not merely as scientists who need research participants for our clinical studies," she said. "This event also helped NIEHS gauge the health and research needs of the community."

Community-engaged research requires collaboration, cooperation, and negotiation with community partners, and a commitment by researchers to address local health issues. NIEHS has a long history of supporting this type of research through its grants program and the 2009 opening of the Clinical Research Unit on the NIEHS campus. As a further commitment to community engagement, in 2012, OHRC cosponsored the South Atlantic National Research Conference, "Engaging the Community for Research Success: What Scientists and IRBs [Institutional Review Boards] Need to Know" (see [story](#)).



Packenham, who chaired the planning and steering committee, said the hard work was put to good use, helping women focus on their health needs and learning ways to lead a healthier life. (Photo courtesy of Veronica Robinson)



1/10

NIEHS and National Toxicology Program (NTP) Director Linda Birnbaum, Ph.D., joined Durham Mayor Pro Tem Cora Cole-McFadden, Durham Public Health Director Gayle Harris, and Wake County, North Carolina, Human Services Director Regina Petteway in welcoming participants. (Photo courtesy of Veronica Robinson)



2/10

NIEHS industrial hygienist Vee Vee Shropshire, right, demonstrated the proper techniques for the Heimlich maneuver. She later joined Lindia Engram, R.N., and Harold Morcombe of Health and Safety Consultants of N.C., not shown, to demonstrate other basic first aid skills. (Photo courtesy of Veronica Robinson)



3/10

Shawn Jeter, right, is a technical information specialist in the NTP Program Operations Branch, and a fitness instructor at the Durham YMCA. She and dozens of event-goers got their heart rates up during the session on dancing for fitness and fun. (Photo courtesy of Veronica Robinson)



4/10

From left, Annette Rice, Sharon Beard, Packenham, and Terry Lewis, members of the Women's Health Awareness Day committee, took a quick break from the busy, yet informative and productive day. (Photo courtesy of Veronica Robinson)



5/10

Blood pressure checks were just one of the many health screenings available at the event. (Photo courtesy of Veronica Robinson)



6/10

The Durham Senior Divas 'N Dude cheerleaders showed the crowd that it's never too late to get active and stay healthy. All of the members are in their 60s and 70s. (Photo courtesy of Robin Arnette)



7/10

Journalist and visual artist Anita Woodley performed a one-woman show, explaining what clinical trials are and how volunteers can determine which study is right for them. (Photo courtesy of Robin Arnette)



8/10

Grace Isshiki, right, NHALES study coordinator, provided information on the NIEHS-led clinical study, which offers free treatment and medications for people with moderate to severe asthma. (Photo courtesy of Veronica Robinson)



9/10

Stavros Garantziotis, M.D., pulmonary specialist and medical director of the NIEHS Clinical Research Unit, gave a seminar on chronic obstructive lung disease. (Photo courtesy of Veronica Robinson)



10/10

All of the Women's Health Awareness Day activities took place at the Miller-Morgan building on the NCCU campus. (Photo courtesy of Robin Arnette)

Health Seminars

- Empowering Women to Love Their Heart
- Diabetes 101 and the Durham Diabetes Coalition
- My Breast Cancer Came Out of Nowhere: What Happened?
- Alzheimer's Disease and Women's Health
- Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease, the Overlooked Women-killer
- Eye Health
- HIV 101
- Superwoman Schema, Stress, and Self-Care: Implications for Mental Health and Wellness Among Women
- "Trials, Not Tribulations: Judging Which Clinical Trial Fits You Best"
- Risk, Awareness, Prevention of Sickle Cell Disease

Health Informational Sessions

- A Need for Change: Better Outcomes for Moms and Babies of Color
- A Journey to Breast Awareness: From Screening to Treatment
- Protecting Women's Preventative Health Services Under the Affordable Care Act
- Human Papillomavirus: The Infection, Cancers, and the Vaccines
- Balancing Act: The Eating and Exercise Equation
- Hormones 101
- When Loving You Is Wrong: Red Flags of an Unhealthy Relationship

Health Services

- Basic First Aid Skills for the Lay Person
- Breast Self-awareness
- Healthy Cooking Demonstrations
- Myths and Realities of Organ Donation
- When You Are Unemployed: Community Access to Resources
- Holistic Practices for Improved Health and General Well-being
- Line Dancing for Fitness and Fun
- Stress Relief: N.C. Foreclosure Prevention Program

On-site Health Screenings

- Breast Mammography Screening
- Blood Pressure Checks
- Lung Capacity Testing
- Diabetes Screening
- Vision Screening
- Dental Screening
- HIV Screening
- Cholesterol Screening
- Mobile Veterans Health Center

The Environmental Factor is produced monthly by the [National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences \(NIEHS\)](http://www.niehs.nih.gov/)

(<http://www.niehs.nih.gov/>)

, Office of Communications and Public Liaison. The content is not copyrighted, and it can be reprinted without permission. If you use parts of Environmental Factor in your publication, we ask that you provide us with a copy for our records. We welcome your [comments and suggestions](#).

(bruskec@niehs.nih.gov)

This page URL: NIEHS website: <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/>

Email the Web Manager at webmanager@niehs.nih.gov